

# Suicide Prevention in Health Services Initiative

Queensland Health data from 2015 showed that 1 in 4 people who died by suspected suicide had contact with a Hospital and Health Service within seven days prior to their death.

Research indicates that 1 in 5 people have contact with a primary health provider such as a GP within one week of their death.

## Response

To help drive improvements across the health system, \$9.6 million over three years has been allocated through the *Suicide Prevention in Health Services Initiative* (the Initiative).

The Initiative forms an integral part of the plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services *Connecting care to recovery 2016-2021*.

The Initiative comprises of three components:

1. The establishment of a Queensland Suicide Prevention Health Taskforce (the Taskforce) as a partnership between the Department of Health, Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) and Primary Health Networks (PHNs).
2. Analysis of events relating to deaths by suspected suicide of people that had a recent contact with a health service to inform future actions and improvements in service responses.
3. Continued implementation of training for hospital emergency department staff and other frontline acute mental health care staff in recognising, responding to and providing care to people presenting to HHSs with suicide risk.

## Suicide Prevention Health Taskforce

The Taskforce is:

- Driving a renewed focus on the responsibility of health services in recognising, responding to and providing care to people at risk of suicide.
- Creating a culture that considers a suicide attempt or death an unacceptable outcome of care
- Identifying and leading innovative partnerships between HHSs, PHNs, and people with a lived experience to promote the delivery of high quality, evidence-based treatments for people identified with suicide risk.

## Suicide Prevention Health Taskforce Phase 1 Action Plan

The Taskforce has developed the Suicide Prevention Health Taskforce Action Plan (the Taskforce Action Plan). The Taskforce Action Plan focuses on the development of suicide prevention policy, strategies, services, and programs to be used in a health service delivery context in order to contribute to a measurable reduction in suicide and its impact on Queenslanders.

### Taskforce Action Plan Priorities

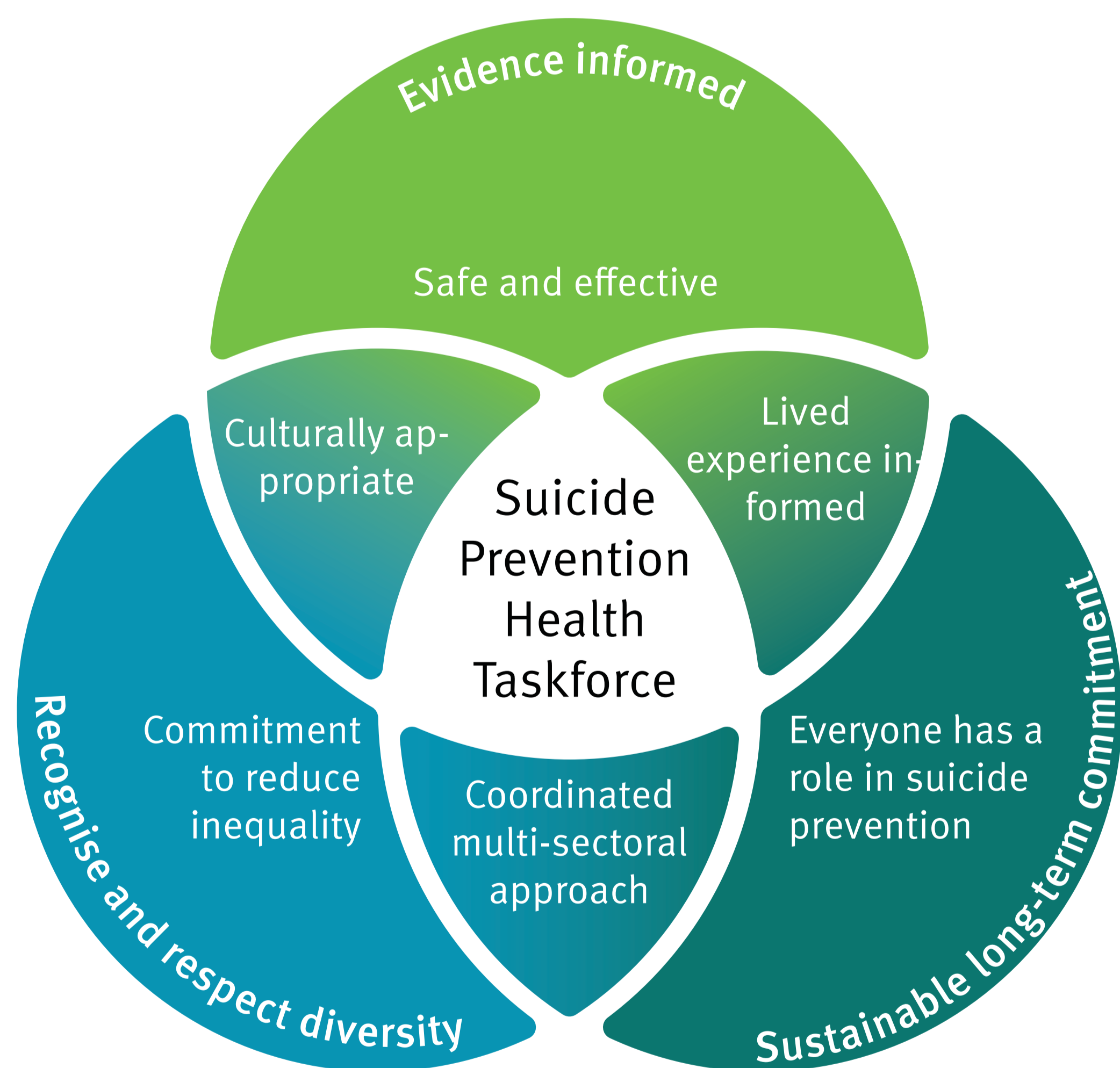
The Taskforce Action Plan identifies 18 areas for investment across three priority areas:

1. Skills development and support
2. Evidence based treatment and care
3. Pathways to care within and external to specialist mental health services

The planning and delivery of Phase one has commenced. Phase two initiatives require further consideration and will be implemented 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

### Rationale behind Taskforce Initiatives

- There are promising approaches emerging nationally and globally that are demonstrating success in reducing suicide attempts and suicides in people under the care of a health service. The Taskforce has found inspiration from these renewed approaches and from empirical research.
- The Action Plan has been informed by a number of these, including the integrated systems approach empirically developed by The Black Dog Institute and the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Suicide Prevention (CRESP), which includes a number of strategies applicable to a health services context.
- Effective suicide prevention is a shared responsibility requiring a comprehensive, cross-sectoral and whole-of-government approach. Therefore the work of the Taskforce complements the actions identified within the Queensland Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2015-2017.
- HHSs and PHNs play an important leadership role in partnering with other local service providers and people with a lived experience to improve the health system's capacity to respond to people at risk of suicide.



## A picture paints a thousand words

The valuable and legitimate contribution of individuals with a lived experience to the development of policy, strategies, services and programs aimed to prevent suicide is recognised by the Suicide Prevention Health Taskforce.

The Lived Experience Roundtable was held on 16 March 2016 in recognition of the need for further targeted consultation with individuals with a broader range of lived experience of suicide.

Graphic recorder, Dr Sue Pillans, skilfully captured the Roundtable discussion.

For further information please contact [suicidepreventionhealthtaskforce@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:suicidepreventionhealthtaskforce@health.qld.gov.au)

